

Lake Tahoe may host Winter X Games

By Kathryn Reed

The last time the two main visitors authorities for Lake Tahoe worked to bring a major sporting event to the basin it was snowed out. Snow would be a good thing for their latest endeavor.



Lake Tahoe is one of four cities in the running to host the Winter X Games for a three-year period starting in 2015.

Aspen, which is one of the contenders, has been the host city-resort for a dozen years. This year's event is Jan. 24-27. The other cities vying for the three-year contract are Park City and Quebec City, Canada.

The local bid is sponsored by Lake Tahoe Sports Organizing Committee, a recently created coalition designed to bring high-end events to the area. Committee partners include Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority, North Lake Tahoe Chamber/Convention & Visitors Bureau/Resort Association, Heavenly Mountain Resort and Squaw Valley.

The two visitors bureaus put together the successful bid to bring the Tour of California bike race to Tahoe in May 2010. But snow canceled the Stateline and Squaw starts.

Now they will be doing a snow dance and having fingers crossed nothing like January 2012 is repeated when snow was so scare that a cycling event would have been welcome. Heavenly and

Squaw would be the mountains where athletes would compete.

Tahoe athletes have a history of doing well at the X Games – Jaime Anderson, Hannah Teter, Shaun White and Elena Hight are a few who have found success at these extreme games that include skiing, snowboarding and snowmobiling.

“The demographics of the X Games align perfectly with attractions and appeal of Lake Tahoe and its combination of outdoor recreation, spectacular natural beauty and 24-hour lifestyle,” Carol Chaplin with the LTVA said in announcing Tahoe making the initial cut.

The 2012, four-day event attracted approximately 108,000 spectators who contributed between \$6 million to \$10 million to the Aspen economy.

In the history of the games, which are owned by ESPN, they have been at Big Bear Lake (1997), Crested Butte (1998, 1999), Mount Snow, Vt. (2000, 2001), and Aspen (2002 through 2014).

Finalists will be picked in April, with the host area announced later this year.